

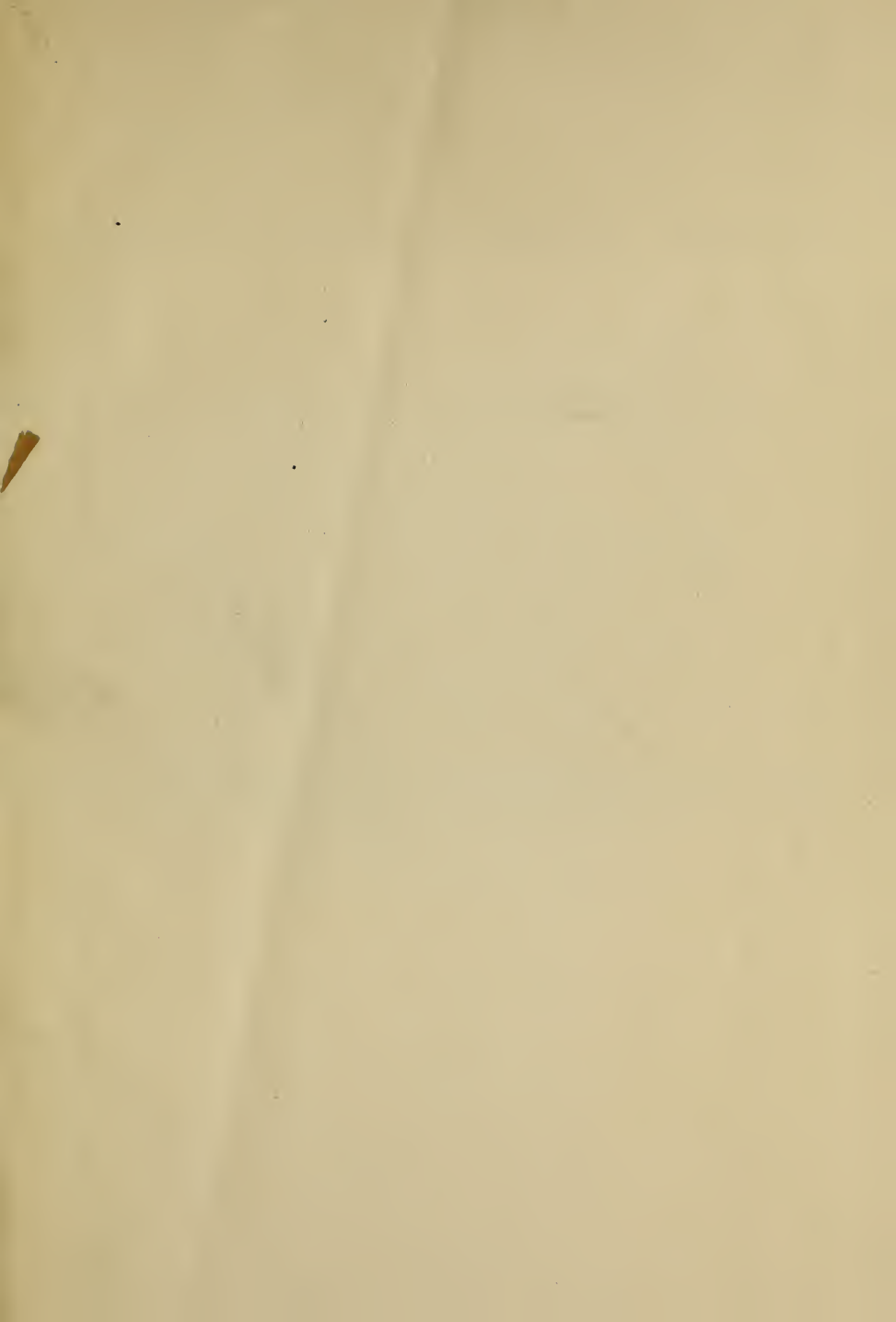


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**THE GOVERNOR'S FOREST POLICY.**

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## THE GOVERNOR'S FOREST POLICY.

*To the Editor of the Evening Post:*

SIR:—Last year the Legislature of New York appropriated \$19,000 for instruction in the State College of Forestry at Ithaca, and also \$5,000 for tree-planting on the college forest tract in the Adirondacks. Gov. Odell vetoed the appropriation for instruction at Ithaca, and approved the appropriation for the Adirondack operations; his reason, as he now declares, being *his hostility to the latter!*

The result was as queer as the Governor's action. The college instruction, which the governor now says he approves, was promptly suspended by the trustees of Cornell University; the cutting of timber on the forest tract, which the governor condemns, still goes on merrily—but without competent technical direction; the replanting, which both Legislature and governor favored, is not going on at all; and there is no proper supervision of the 300,000 young trees already set, or the 2,000,000 seedlings in the nurseries, because all professional foresters have been dismissed. In a word, the governor has killed what he professes to approve, and left the thing he regards as an evil in worse form than ever.

To get out of the situation thus created, the governor now proposes that the University shall deed the college forest tract to the State and that this tract shall be added to the Forest Reserve, upon which *all forestry is forbidden by the State Constitution*. The parties to the present contract with the University are to be compensated by the State for the cancellation of that contract. Then the College of Forestry is to go on again, teaching especially "farm forestry" or the care of woodlots by farmers.

Probably the first part of this plan will go through. It is not very business-like to pay a large additional sum for the privilege

of abandoning an experiment on which \$200,000 has already been spent; but the governor and certain wealthy owners of private country houses in the Adirondacks desire it eagerly; the parties to be compensated with money by the State are doubtless not unwilling; the trustees of the University have shown already that they do not dare to oppose the governor's will; and there seems to be no one in the Legislature who cares to do so. It is likely, therefore, that we shall see the abandonment by this State of the wise and provident attempt to train practical foresters and settle by adequate experiment, on a working scale, the problems of economic forestry which a rapidly approaching exhaustion of the timber supply will soon call us to face.

Such being the case, all that the friends of economic forestry can hope to do is to prevent the reduction of the State College of Forestry to the rank of a subordinate department of the College of Agriculture, devoted to the management of woods by farmers. This is, of course, a subject worthy of attention; but it has no more to do with the overwhelming need of commercial forestry on a large scale than "Arbor Day" has to do with the lumber industry.

Let the Legislature at least provide for the continuance of the teaching of real forestry at Cornell, so far as that can be done without a real forest in which to train practical experts. Let it at least leave the chance open, that, through the act of some public-spirited citizen or citizens, or even (who knows?) upon the recommendation of some future governor, the much-needed larger work may be once more undertaken—not to be abandoned again on the threshold.

R. W. RAYMOND.

Brooklyn, Jan. 22.

### Governor Odell's Insincerity.

A relatively short passage of the Governor's annual message is devoted to his suspension of the State College of Forestry. We regret to be obliged to say at the outset that hardly a single word of Mr. Odell's exposé is based on truth. Either he has not the slightest knowledge of what transpired before his time and what he has done himself, or else he attempts consciously to veil the truth.

Mr. Odell says verbatim: "By chap. 122 of the laws of 1898 the State purchased townships 23 and 26 in County of Franklin, and Cornell University thereupon took title and undertook practical demonstration and instruction in the School of Forestry. Its operations had for their object the substitution for so-called worthless timber, valuable growths, but this has resulted in the practical destruction of all trees upon the lands on which the experiment was in progress. No compensating benefits seem possible to the present generation. The preservation of the forests is primarily the protection of the water supply, and this is not possible through the denudation of the lands. Therefore, this school failed of its object, as understood by its founders, which led me to veto the item for its support in the appropriation bill for 1903."

In § 2 of the law cited by the governor the object of the demonstration forest in the Adirondacks—with an area of 30,000 acres, while the total area of the projected State forest is 3,000,000 acres—is defined to be, that "the college of forestry shall conduct upon said land such experiments in forestry as it may deem most advantageous to the interests of the State and the advancement of the science of forestry, and may plant, raise, cut and sell timber of such species and quantities and in such manner as it may deem best, with a view of obtaining and imparting knowledge concerning the scientific management and use of forests, their regulation and administration, the production, harvesting and reproduc-

tion of woodcrops and earning a revenue therefrom."

Aside from this, it is only intimated that the area is to serve as a demonstration forest for the students of the College. *Not a word is contained in the law regarding protection of the watershed.* It would, indeed, have been ridiculous, if such a function had been expected from an area of 30,000 acres in the heart of the immense forest and mountain region.

It is true, that the management of the Director, Dr. Fernow, met with a strong opposition. It would lead too far to explain this matter, nor is it at all necessary. The fact remains that the Governor, with evident intention, ignores what object this area was really to serve. It is also a fact, that the management of the demonstration forest was entirely divorced from the financial management of the College itself; for the forest management the legislature had appropriated a separate working fund of \$30,000 without reference to the finances of the College, for the very purpose of making the forest experiment independent and complete in itself. Had the Governor closed this experiment and withdrawn the demonstration area, he could have with a semblance of justice referred to the aforementioned opposition, while the College could have continued. But his veto was of the appropriation for the maintenance of the College, not of the forest management.

The College has by no means failed in fulfilling its purpose, on the contrary in the few years of its existence it has educated competent foresters, who have been sought for everywhere. Nearly a hundred students, mostly New York men, were by the Governor's stroke of the pen put out and forced to emigrate to Yale or Michigan or elsewhere, much to their financial loss. Of this the Governor has nothing to say.

The action of the Governor was simply inspired by personal prejudices, and underhanded; he cannot now cover it up by manipulation of the facts.































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